Strong winds and a spell of cold weather for northern UK

8 January 2015 - The Met Office has issued a number of severe weather warnings for northern parts of the UK as two Atlantic storms are set to bring strong winds, followed by the potential for snow and icy roads.

A rapidly deepening low pressure system passing just to the north of the UK will see winds strengthen Thursday evening and into Friday morning.

It will be windy for most areas, but northern parts of Scotland will see the most severe conditions with gusts of up to 100 mph possible. Winds of 60-70 mph are likely more widely across the north of the UK.

During the early hours of Friday, it's also possible there could be winds of 70-80 mph across the Central Belt of Scotland.

Will Lang, Chief Meteorologist at the Met Office, said: "The winds will be at their strongest through the early hours of Friday and this brings the potential for disruption across Scotland, but there is a chance that strong, gusty winds could persist into the early part of the morning rush hour as well.

"We'd advise anyone planning to travel during the early part of the morning and into the early rush hour to be prepared for some transport disruption and check traffic and travel conditions before heading out to ensure you can make your journey safely."

Winds will rapidly subside through the later part of the morning, leading to a spell of quieter and very mild conditions through Friday before winds start to pick up again.

The second storm is passing further to the north, away from the UK, but is still likely to bring gusts of 60-70 mph to northern parts of Scotland and gusts of up to 90 mph in the most exposed regions in the north.

Deputy First Minister, John Swinney, said: "Contingency plans are being made by transport authorities and passengers should expect cancellations and disruption on ferries and the railways. Travel operators' websites will have all of the latest information and people should check them before they set off on their journey.

"On the roads, bridges could be affected by high winds, and driving conditions could be challenging, particularly for high-sided vehicles. Motorists should allow extra time for their journeys and check the Traffic Scotland website before they set-out. Utility companies are also increasing resources and moving them to places where the storm is likely to damage the electricity network."

As the storm tracks further away from the UK on Saturday, the strongest winds will subside and colder air will move in behind. The Met Office has issued a severe weather warning for potential snow and ice in northern parts of the UK.

Benedetta Dini, Deputy Chief Meteorologist, said: "After the very mild conditions of Friday, we'll see a marked drop in temperatures during the day on Saturday.

"This could mean we see some snow showers with accumulations of a few centimetres possible in Scotland, Northern Ireland and high ground in northern parts of England. Higher ground in the north could see snow accumulations of perhaps 10-15 centimetres.

"There will also be a risk of ice on untreated road surfaces, so anyone planning to travel in the warning area should be prepared for difficult driving conditions, particularly on higher routes."

Further unsettled weather is expected after this, with winds expected to strengthen in the north once again later on Sunday and into Monday morning.

Through this period of unsettled weather people are advised to stay up to date with the latest forecasts and warnings from the Met Office to get the latest information.

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